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California Threatens to Defund 600+ Schools Over Low Vaccine Rates

California is auditing more than 600 schools for allegedly failing to reach student vaccination targets or file vaccination reports. But critics say the numbers are misleading and the audit is driven by Big Pharma and political interests.

By Brenda Baletti, Ph.D.

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The California Department of Health (CDPH) is threatening to restrict funding for the more than 600 schools being audited by the state because they reported more than 10% of their kindergarten or seventh grade students were not fully vaccinated last year or because they failed to file a vaccination report with the state, EdSource reported.

"Schools found to have improperly admitted students who have (not) met immunization requirements may be subject to loss of average daily attendance payments for those children," the CDPH said in an email.

CDPH posted the audit list, which included 449 schools with kindergarten students, 175 schools with seventh graders, 56 schools with both grades and 39 schools that had not filed a vaccination report.

California students are considered "not fully vaccinated" if they have not provided proper immunization records to their school, if they don't have the vaccinations required by the school system or if they have been admitted to schools conditionally while they are in the process of finishing their school-mandated vaccine series, according to the state audit guide.

If a student behind on the vaccine requirements has not received a first dose of a required vaccine within 10 days of starting school and a second dose of a required vaccine within four months of the first dose, the student must be excluded from school.

The audit guide indicates that to determine whether schools have students behind schedule, auditors check whether kindergarteners have two doses of a varicella (chickenpox) vaccine and two doses of a measles vaccine and whether seventh graders have two doses of varicella and one dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), their sixth pertussis-containing vaccine.

Oakland Unified School District, with 48 elementary schools and eight of the seventh grade schools on the list, has the highest number of schools being audited. Los Angeles Unified has 75 of its non-charter schools on the audit list, while Pomona Unified has 13, San Francisco Unified 14 and San Juan Unified in Sacramento County, eight.

The vaccination audit has been occurring in public schools only since the 2021-2022 school year, when 45 schools made the list.

Schools in violation of the state law must submit corrected attendance reports that reflect the reduction in average daily attendance cited in the audit finding, which will likely reduce their funding, according to CDPH spokesperson Scott Roark.

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Sensationalizing vaccine numbers

Over the last year, legacy media organizations such as The New York Times, CNN and The Washington Post along with public health officials across the country have been sounding the alarm over decreasing rates of routine vaccination among U.S. children.

But even at its lowest point — the 2020-2021 school year — the kindergarten vaccination rate only dipped to 94% from 95%, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Experts cited in these articles blame the drop on pandemic disruptions to U.S. healthcare, "vaccine hesitancy" about the COVID-19 vaccine bleeding over into other vaccines and the availability of non-medical vaccine exemptions.

EdSource reported that vaccination rates in California, which had been climbing since the state eliminated the personal belief exemption in 2015, plunged after schools closed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thousands of children in California were unable to start the school year in 2022 because they were behind on their vaccinations, it reported.

But EdSource also reported that the kindergarten vaccination rate was 92.8% in 2020 — down from 95% in 2018 — but went back up to 94% in 2021.

Substack writer and analyst Karl Kanthak told The Defender these numbers are being used to create the appearance of a crisis, which he says is part of a broader attack on vaccine exemptions.

Between the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, which gave vaccine makers immunity for any injuries caused by vaccines, the 1994 Vaccines for Children Program that provides no-cost vaccines to low-income children and the school mandates, Big Pharma has achieved nearly full saturation of the pediatric market, Kanthak said.

But that's not the case for the adult market, where vaccine uptake is much lower without mandates. "Eliminating school exemptions for children is a major step in making exemptions unavailable for adults," Kanthak said.

Because the child market was already saturated, "they [pharma] couldn't use low rates as an excuse" to argue legislators should eliminate access to exemptions, he said.

That has resulted in the misrepresentation of vaccine rates, where it is made to seem as if high numbers of children are missing required vaccines, raising the specter of disease outbreaks, said Kanthak, which is apparent in the audit and EdSource's reporting on it and most media headlines about vaccines.

"So you get policy influenced by headline," he said.

"The Wuhan Cover-Up" by Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

The Wuhan Cover-Up

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Audit numbers are 'misleading'

For example, Kanthak told The Defender that many shots required for kindergarteners, including the last doses of the MMR, varicella, DTaP and polio can be administered between the ages of 4 and 6, according to the CDC's childhood immunization schedule.

Doctors or parents planning to complete the course of vaccination may choose to do so later in that time period for any number of reasons related to the child's development, health condition or previous vaccination.

Because children start kindergarten in that window, many children being counted as unvaccinated are on the CDC schedule, even if they are not yet "fully vaccinated," he said.

"To count conditional admissions as unvaccinated is misleading," he said.

"The tracking systems are not designed to track students who are simply still 'in process' with pediatricians who are following the medical guidelines and individualizing care to the patient," he said.

Instead, "The schools are measuring too-young students, too early in the school year, for injections they are not overdue for until second grade."

Kanthak said the audit numbers themselves are misleading because some of the schools listed have very few students and some of those students are missing something marginal.

"The first two schools on the list have only two seventh grade students, therefore one student missing their Tdap — sixth pertussis injection — gives those schools an only '50% fully vaccinated' measurement."

The audit lists a significant number of schools with very few students. Sixty-three elementary schools and 53 seventh grade schools have fewer than nine students. Thirty-five elementary schools and nineteen seventh grade schools have fewer than 20 students.

In those schools, having one or two students not "fully vaccinated" places them on the audit list, but it is a small number of overall students. Using a percentage in any population less than 100 is misleading, he added, because each student comprises more than 1% of the total.

Kanthak added that such reports typically exclude these small numbers to protect children's confidentiality.

Only 61 of the kindergarten schools on the list and 46 of the seventh grade schools on the list had more than 100 students.

Overall, the total number of kindergarten students in the more than 500 schools on the audit list comprises about 5.3% of the total 471,379 kindergarten students in California.

California-based attorney Brad Hakala of the Hakala Law Group told The Defender, "In a state that has in excess of 39 million residents ... it seems like statistics are consistently being skewed" to favor the position that dropping vaccine rates is a crisis.

"With that said, and in light of parental rights which more and more parents are attempting to exercise," he added:

> "There certainly seems to be a growing concern among parents ... who are avoiding or delaying the vaccination of their child/children for one reason or another. ...
>
> "Some parents are not fundamentally opposed to the traditional vaccines being administered to their children, but they just want to space them out in frequency, timing, and volume, especially in light of ongoing concerns of vaccine injuries. Others want a more holistic approach and are opposed to their children having any vaccinations.
>
> "I believe that the pandemic, the emergency use authorized (EUA) shots and the ever-increasing negative health ramifications that we are seeing arise from these untested medications that are still under EUA, are highlighting the already growing concern that parents are having with injecting their children with more and more medications.
>
> "From the requisite number of injections and vaccines significantly increasing over the years, to the way that society has been treated by varying governmental entities since 2020, parents just want to protect their children and have the absolute right to protect their children, and I personally think that is having an overall effect on the current vaccination rates within California."

Vaccine rights attorney Greg Glaser told The Defender he thinks the rising concerns parents have with vaccination has the potential to pose a real threat to Big Pharma, which is "calling the shots" on these audits to make sure vaccination rates don't drop at all.

"The pharmaceutical companies fund the politicians and then the politicians put pressure on the Department of Public Health," he said. "The first lever they're able to control is these public health officers and public health departments."

"Vaccine hesitancy scares Big Pharma," he said.

He added:

> "Pharma is very sensitive to trends. They can see when parents are no longer choosing vaccination and they know what a trend looks like. ...
>
> "Pharma's clearly seeing a trend that less parents are vaccinating. So they're using their levers of power in public health departments to audit schools to stop that trend."

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Ad hoc immunization clinics raise concerns

EdSource reports that schools and districts trying to increase vaccination rates are sending vaccination guidelines home with students and health services teams and reaching out to families to let them know where to get vaccinated.

Also, some schools or school districts are offering immunization clinics.

For example, Sacramento City Unified School District offers weekly free vaccination clinics at its district enrollment center. And Gateway Community Charters offered a clinic at its middle school.

The presence of such clinics also raises concerns, Glaser said, specially given the recent push by the U.S. federal government to rapidly expand the use of school-based health centers across the country.

This push has some critics concerned children will receive, or be pressured into receiving, unnecessary or unwanted medical interventions without their parents' knowledge or consent.

Dr. Mary Kelly Sutton — an integrative physician whose license was revoked by the California medical board for writing eight vaccine medical exemptions the board alleges were not fully compliant with CDC regulations — told The Defender she saw the clinics as a way to pressure families and children into vaccination in ways that could violate their rights.

"Schools are not medical offices, and the records on vaccines are not complete, so some children will get vaccines they do not need," she said.

Sutton added, "Many questions must be asked: how is permission obtained? How is the vaccination transmitted to the child's chart in the real doctor's office? How are adverse events handled medically and financially?"

Vaccine exemptions: 'as California goes, so goes the nation'

California has been ground zero for struggles over vaccine mandates for over a decade.

In 2012, California passed Assembly Bill 2109 to restrict the ability of parents to have their children exempted from vaccine requirements based on personal beliefs.

Where before parents simply had to write a letter stating their personal beliefs, the new law stipulated that parents seeking exemption for their children must get the signature of an authorized healthcare provider stating that parents had received information about the risks of not being vaccinated.

In 2015, allegedly prompted by a measles outbreak at Disneyland — that the media blamed on unvaccinated children — and low vaccination rates in many California schools, Democratic State Sens. Richard Pan and Ben Allen authored a controversial bill, Senate Bill 277, that eliminated the "personal belief exemption" altogether.

Pan's SB 277 passed in 2015 and Gov. Jerry Brown signed it into law, despite significant pushback from parents, hundreds of whom protested at the legislature.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Pan also proposed legislation mandating the COVID-19 vaccine for all school children, with no personal or religious exemptions permitted — before the full approval of the vaccine for children by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The bill did not pass.

He also wrote a 2021 op-ed in The Washington Post likening "anti-vaccine extremism" to domestic terrorism.

The passage of SB 277 in 2015 made California the first state in nearly 35 years to eliminate nonmedical vaccine exemptions. Beginning in January 2016, nonmedical vaccine exemptions were no longer accepted for school entry.

After that, school vaccination rates rose. Parents who don't want to vaccinate their children can obtain a medical exemption, have their children enrolled in special education services or homeschool them.

California has one of the highest rates of homeschooled children in the country, and those numbers are higher post-pandemic.

But California has also taken an aggressive stance against most medical exemptions.

Doctors providing medical exemptions have been investigated by the California Medical Board, with many of them having their licenses revoked.

All medical exemptions for California children issued on or after Jan. 1, 2021, are subject to review by CDPH and can be revoked. All exemptions are automatically reviewed if they are submitted in a school where the immunization rate is below 95% if the school has failed to report its vaccination rates, if the physician writing the exemption has written more than five medical exemptions in a calendar year or if CDPH deems it necessary to protect public health.

As a result, Glaser said, "the number of medical exemptions in California has slowed to a trickle." And those rules, he said, were put in place by Pan "for political reasons, not for reasons of public health."

Glaser also said he thought these audits were happening in California because "as California goes, so goes the nation."

He added, "When something is tried and succeeds in California, according to the metrics set by those in power, then they have a justification to roll it out across the nation."

Hakala thinks that since 2020, "an increasing portion of the population is growing in their concern for what messages and information the government is putting forth, and the laws that are being passed that affect parental rights, especially in California."

He added:

> "I think there's a growing distrust for the veracity of the information that is being disseminated, and on the basis of the laws that are being passed — and not just by one side of the political aisle or the other — but all information being disseminated seems to be increasingly scrutinized, as society's skepticism continues to grow.
>
> "This, in part, I think has a direct effect on the numbers that the audit report exemplifies.
>
> "The public's trust seems to be consistently evaporating, and it is my belief that a significant amount of work will need to be done to repair that trust."

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Brenda Baletti, Ph.D.

Brenda Baletti Ph.D. is a reporter for The Defender. She wrote and taught about capitalism and politics for 10 years in the writing program at Duke University. She holds a Ph.D. in human geography from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's from the University of Texas at Austin.

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Best Newest Oldest

Susan
5 days ago edited
This is absolutely absurd...and very undemocratic. Vaccination should be left up to the parents, their children, & their doctors, not the schools or the government.
24 0 Reply • Share ›

Duties
5 days ago
Yet another reason to leave California.
16 0 Reply • Share ›

Leslie Taylor → Duties
4 days ago edited
Depopulation is the intent and worse in particularly beautiful mountainous or coastal communities and regions. Places that the NWO self-proclaimed elite has their eyes on for the development of their hive cities that they'll have AI controlled, including 'their' dehumanized inhabitants. If these parents and schools don't comply, and even go so far as take their children out of school to protect their children's health by not injecting them with whatever all is in the so-called vaccines thus profitable to big pharma or resulting in neurologically impaired children, thus candidates for implants or other transhumanism procedures, then they'll respond with DEWs like in Maui. These 'elites' see themselves as superior, advanced beings and the rest of us as primitive, innesential and in their way. It is a program of annihilation and technological enslavement of the human race for their mad, to say nothing of sadistic, concept of evolutionary progress. This is not unlike the Europeans and Conquistadores that genocided indigenous populations in the Americas during the 15th through the 18th centuries which they believe was and still is necessary for human evolution. The same rationale was behind the human trafficking and enslavement of Africans. Now they traffic in the sexual manipulation and slavery of children. Has humanity evolved as a result of all this horror? Is humanity any more equitable and loving toward one another, and other species? No. There's been absolutely no true human evolution over thousands of years of ongoing diseases, tragic warfare, the enslavement and starvation of the majority of all the human lives that have ever lived on planet Earth.
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Cindy → Leslie Taylor
4 days ago
Thank you for pointing out that this is not heaven. We are in satan's domain. These atrocities have been happening throughout time and we will continue the good fight until the end of time when God will triumph over evil.
0 0 Reply • Share ›

EDUARDO DE PAULA → Cindy
3 days ago
Thank you for defining it brilliantly. And I go further, I give names to the horses: families Rockefeller, Hotschild, Morgans, Ford, George Soros and other members of the Bilderberg club.
0 0 Reply • Share ›

Jerry Alatalo
5 days ago
One can only imagine the stress levels of parents trying to make wise decisions regarding vaccination of their children - especially now, after they've learned the immense numbers of men, women and children killed and seriously harmed by the "safe and effective" mRNA vaccines (injections ... bioweapons).
11 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell → Jerry Alatalo
5 days ago
The book Turtles all the way down' authored in Israel, is a real education on the myths of vaccine safety. I can't bear that children are being sacrificed to pharma, and stupid parents go along.
9 0 Reply • Share ›

IamaproudAmerican
5 days ago
I wouldn't have my kids take any vaccines at this point! California politicians are putting children in danger....again!
9 0 Reply • Share ›

earthcaretaker → IamaproudAmerican
17 minutes ago
I think CA politicians are murders and we need to shout that at them every chance we get.
0 0 Reply • Share ›

Robin K
5 days ago
The schools have been terrible in California since the early 1960s. When I left the Midwest with parents at age 9 to go to California due to father's military transfer, I was so far ahead of those kids academically it was laughable. Listen parents: Most schools in the Nation now toxic for your kids, besides being 'dumb-down'; so my advice is to take your kids out of all those schools. Defund the Public School System. That also hugely impacts the count down toward the inevitable demise of Big Pharma as well.
7 0 Reply • Share ›

Cindy
4 days ago
Prayers for God's intervention against these attacks on our children. I called the Department of Education to protest the state's attack on schools that rejected Newsom's text books and the DOE didn't answer their phones. I didn't know about these school audits and wonder what else is this government hiding from the public is the DOE disconnecting their phones again. As taxpayers we need more control over how our tax dollars are spent. We are funding big Pharma to poison our children with vaccines and the government to force sales of books and vaccines. Firing doctors and taking their licenses for putting children's health above vaccine sales is evil. Thank you for this article!
6 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell
5 days ago
Welcome to Chinafornia! This is the state taking full control of your kids, because they now control their bodies if they want a socialized education. And yes, of course the kids will feel coerced by health centers and propaganda sent home. It is so expensive to live in California, both paychecks are needed and so the kids have to be farmed out to schools regardless of the loss of control by the parent. No control group remaining really, so pharma can hide indefinitely the destruction wielded on these innocents' bodies and future health. They are liability free, but without a control group it doesn't really matter does it? Amazing how parents though have allowed this to happen. It would not have happened if early on, most had not complied, but people are hypnotized by those who are good at math and memorization, even if they don't have an empathic bone in their body or a bent toward the 'ART' of healing. Most don't actually. There are a few decent ones, but if they work for hospitals, that is a moot point. It is an illusion that we have sovereignty, we don't, and it seems like most don't want it.
6 0 Reply • Share ›

SHENZI → CastleConnell
4 hours ago edited
It's shocking that this could happen in my beloved California which used to be the most enlightened free spirited state in the nation. ☀️🌊🏄🐬🌈☮️
Now it appears to have been hijacked by fascists.
STAY FREE!!!
1 0 Reply • Share ›

CastleConnell → SHENZI
3 hours ago
Yes, Germany was very progressive too before the Nazi's came to power. (I know they were hugely in debt, but their academics and philosophers and scientists were quite enlightened). I watched a fascinating documentary on Netflix about the police unit 101 during WWII. It really is shocking to see how fast most human beings devolve in a short space of time when they are exposed to state propaganda.
0 0 Reply • Share ›

Orabilis
5 days ago
Good news: they're giving you an opportunity to BE FREE from state control.
Don't be stupid -- Take it.

Take this money and shove it, need be your only reply.
4 0 Reply • Share ›

Cindy
4 days ago
CHD keep up the good work. This greed has been happening for a long time. The pharmaceutical companies using mandates and sickness to increase sales keeps getting worse. In January 2023 Pfizer after injuring and killing people with their vaccines and drugs announced their goal for 2023 is to make $100 billion. They need forced sales of vaccines and drugs to accomplish their goal. Big Pharma has crossed the line several times paying bribes to politicians yet nobody gets punished, goes to prison, or loses their jobs or their ill gotten gains. It's up to Americans to stop funding big Pharma, stop buying any of their drugs, narcotics, vaccines, over the counter and perscription medications or fund any of their affiliated companies. We need to write all of our representatives and tell them to stop taking bribes and stop funding bad corporations like these big Pharma companies with a history of breaking the law. These companies should be barred from getting government funds and pay their fair share of taxes. Our efforts do work otherwise they wouldn't be pushing their agenda this hard or employing illegal methods to sell their poisons. Keep it up!!
3 0 Reply • Share ›

Sherry Davis
4 days ago
Home school. At least you would know what they are being taught and not have get vaccines. Our bodies, our choice. Do not comply!
3 0 Reply • Share ›

Flora Flowers
5 days ago

I would NEVER allow to poison my child !
I rather keep him/her at home.California schools are indoctrination camps anyway,why bother?

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Matt
3 hours ago

Those CA schools should file criminal complaints of attempted bodily harm and attempted murder by Gavin Newsom.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

kris
4 days ago

Wasn't Newsom sending his kid to an in person private school during the lockdown? So if you can afford private school you can do whatever you want but if your parents can't afford private school... or believe in the public school system.. well then big pharma captured politicians can force a lockdown, or force these toxic shots... just say no to alluminum adjuvants, just say no to disrupted education!!

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